



Igor Tregub Councilmember, District 4

Mark Humbert, Councilmember, District 8

Cecilia Lunaparra, Councilmember, District 7

CONSENT CALENDAR  
July 29, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Igor Tregub (Author), Councilmember Mark Humbert (co-sponsor), Councilmember Cecilia Lunaparra (co-sponsor)

Subject: Resolution in Support of California Senate Bill 627 (Wiener, Arreguín, Pérez), the No Secret Police Act, to Prohibit Non-Essential Face Covering for Law Enforcement and Require Officer Identification During Operations

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution in support of California State Senate Bill (SB) 627 (Wiener, Arreguín, Pérez), the No Secret Police Act, which would prohibit law enforcement officers from covering their faces during operations (with exceptions for medical and fire-related protection), and require visible identification on uniforms in the state of California; and distribute copies to the California Governor Gavin Newsom, Senators Scott Wiener, Jesse Arreguín, and Sasha Renée Pérez, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, California Senate President pro tempore Mike McGuire, and California Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas to advocate for its passage.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Amid increasing public concern about the presence of unidentified, masked law enforcement agents conducting operations in communities across California, SB 627 would prohibit law enforcement officers of all levels from covering their faces while interacting with the public. The bill allows for exceptions for approved face coverings and their appropriate uses, including, but not limited to, N-95 masks to prevent the spread of airborne diseases or wildfire smoke inhalation.

SB 627 also establishes a statewide standard for law enforcement transparency and accountability by requiring officers to display names or other identifying information while performing official duties, with exceptions for officers engaged in an undercover assignment. The bill will enforce such violations as infractions for sworn peace officers and a misdemeanor for non-sworn peace officers.

Cities across California, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Concord, and Montebello, have recently been subject to federal operations by agents wearing masks and lacking visible identification. These concealments of identification erode public trust and create fear. In several incidents, individuals have been detained without due process, having their rights denied in detention centers.<sup>1</sup> United States citizens have also been wrongfully detained by immigration enforcement, leading to further mistrust.<sup>2</sup>

The presence of unnecessarily masked and unidentifiable agents undermines democratic principles and disrupts communities, and reduces public willingness to engage with law enforcement, report crimes, or testify in court. In the worst cases, this erosion of trust in law enforcement inspires vigilantism.

In South Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Florida, individuals in several incidents have been caught, and some charged, with impersonating law enforcement.<sup>3</sup> These incidents are often committed with the intention of intimidating individuals that the perpetrators racially profile as immigrants. California Attorney General Rob Bonta issued a warning in response to increased reports of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) impersonators and other immigration scams.<sup>4</sup> By requiring visible identification on uniforms, these impersonators will be more easily identified as imposters.

This bill intends to strengthen public trust and safeguard against secretive, extrajudicial enforcement by ensuring that all law enforcement personnel conducting operations in California do so in an open and accountable manner.

The City of Berkeley Chief of Police was consulted in recommendations for this Resolution.

## FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Limited staff time associated with communicating the city's position to the State representatives.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ice-record-59000-immigrant-detainees-half-no-criminal-record/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/jun/16/los-angeles-immigration-raids-montebello>

<sup>3</sup> <https://prospect.org/justice/2025-06-24-ice-impersonations-proliferate-agencys-undercover-tactics/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-bonta-issues-warning-amid-increased-reports-fake-ice-officers>

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments:

1. Resolution
2. Fact Sheet

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###N.S.

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF CALIFORNIA SENATE BILL 627, THE NO SECRET POLICE ACT, TO PROHIBIT NON-ESSENTIAL FACE COVERINGS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AND REQUIRE OFFICER IDENTIFICATION DURING OPERATIONS**

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 627 (Wiener, Arreguín, Pérez) seeks to prohibit law enforcement officers at all levels operating in California from covering their faces during operations, with exceptions for personal protection against airborne diseases, wildfire smoke, and other dangers; and

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 627 would also require all officers to display names or other identifying information while performing official duties; and

**WHEREAS**, recent operations conducted by unidentified and masked law enforcement agents have bred fear and distrust in communities across California, particularly among immigrant populations and communities of color; and

**WHEREAS**, these secretive operations bear troubling similarities to tactics used by authoritarian regimes to intimidate and detain civilians without accountability or oversight; and

**WHEREAS**, the nation was witnessed an increase of impersonation of law enforcement, particularly by individuals targeting people of Latine descent; and

**WHEREAS**, identification requirements will prevent further these incidents of law enforcement impersonation; and

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 627 explicitly affirms the Legislature's intent to allow Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T) and tactical officers to protect their physical safety while maintaining transparency and public accountability; and

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 627 enhances public safety by protecting civilians from impersonation and vigilantism, and intends to dissuade unconstitutional detentions by encouraging accountability; and

**WHEREAS**, Berkeley has a longstanding commitment to police reform, civil liberties, and community accountability and supports efforts that promote transparent, constitutional policing practices; and

**WHEREAS**, California has a responsibility to lead on civil rights protections, especially when federal agencies engage in practices that violate the principles of transparency and due process

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Berkeley City Council hereby declares its support for California Senate Bill 627, which prohibits face coverings by law enforcement during public interactions and requires officers to display identifying information; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Berkeley City Council directs the City Manager to distribute copies of this resolution to California Governor Gavin Newsom, Senators Scott Wiener, Jesse Arreguín, and Sasha Renée Pérez, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, California Senate President Pro Tempore Mike McGuire, and California Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas in strong support of California Senate Bill 627.



## Senator Scott Wiener, 11<sup>th</sup> Senate District

### Senate Bill 627 – No Secret Police Act Fact Sheet

#### SUMMARY

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Senate Bill 627 prohibits law enforcement at all levels operating in California from covering their faces while conducting operations, with limited exemptions for masking for medical or fire-related reasons. The bill states the intent to ensure SWAT officers can protect their faces further requires officers to have their names or other identifying information on their uniforms.

Public safety depends on the public's trust in law enforcement, and public trust is undermined when masked, unidentified, and armed agents disrupt communities and disappear members of the public without warrant or warning and without anyone knowing who they are. It foments an atmosphere of chaos and mistrust and encourages vigilantism. SB 627 bolsters public safety and trust in law enforcement by requiring enforcement be conducted in an open and transparent manner — and making crystal clear that in America, there are no secret police.

#### BACKGROUND

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In recent months, federal law enforcement officials have conducted raids — in California and across the country — while covering their faces and, at times, badges, names, and other identifying information. They sometimes wear jackets stating “Police” — effectively impersonating local law enforcement. Such raids have occurred in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Concord, Downey, Montebello, and many other places since the new federal administration began ramping up its immigration enforcement efforts.

In some operations, federal law enforcement have appeared masked to grab residents off the street and whisk them away to detention centers across state lines without contacting their families or loved ones. University students, workers, and others have been grabbed off the street, sent to detention centers and even been sent to a gulag in El Salvador.

The use of face coverings and failure to provide identifying information have uncovered a glaring omission in state law: that all law enforcement should be identifying themselves and not hiding their identities. Given that the current federal administration is urging and even trying to force state and local law enforcement to help enforce immigration laws, California should end this omission for all levels of law enforcement.

Secret police forces are core features of authoritarian regimes. They frequently appear masked and unidentified to intimidate or disappear members of the ruling regime's political opposition. One in four Californians was born outside of the U.S., and many have direct — and frequently traumatic — experience with such secret police in their home countries.

#### PROBLEM

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The introduction of unidentified law enforcement conducting operations in the U.S. is already disrupting communities and undermining public safety. In Florida, a woman was recently arrested for allegedly dressing as a masked ICE officer and kidnapping her ex-boyfriend's wife. Public acceptance of secret police tactics will only inspire more copycat behavior from the public.

Masking their faces while conducting operations undermines the public's trust in law enforcement

– making it less likely people will report crimes and testify in court. This practice also inspires an environment of fear among the general public that runs counter to the basic principles of democracy.

### **SOLUTION**

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SB 627 prohibits law enforcement officers from wearing any mask or personal disguise while interacting with the public in the performance of their duties. The bill exempts medical grade masks (surgical or N95) and masks designed to protect against exposure to smoke during a state of emergency related to wildfires. The bill defines law enforcement officers as any officer of a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency, or any person acting on behalf of a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency. A violation of this prohibition is punishable as a misdemeanor.

This bill also states that it is the intent of the Legislature to ensure that SWAT officers can protect their faces from physical harm while performing their responsibilities and to require local, state, and federal law enforcement officers to include their names or other identifying information on their uniforms.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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